



ARIZONA *SERVES* TASK FORCE

DES Director's Office, Conference Room 104
Meeting Minutes for January 20, 2012

Members Present

Sylvester Ajagbe
Clarence Carter
Susan Corsaro-Johnson
Terry Crist (Chair)
Russ Dickey
Kathleen Heard
Cathi Herrod
Gary Kinnaman
Scott Neuman
Diane Swanson
Billy Thrall
Mark Upton
Nicola Winkel

Members Absent

Judith Fritsch
Karl Gentles
Peg Harmon
Mike Normand
Wayne Tormala
Jane Wabnik
Steve Zabalski
Cynthia Zwick

Staff Present

Jamie Bennett
Chuck Fitzgerald
Cassandra Larsen

I. Welcome & Introductions

Dr. Terry M. Crist
Chairman

Chair Crist welcomed Task Force members and guests at 10:06 a.m. with a "Happy New Year" and a thank you for all of the time and effort invested in serving the most vulnerable in our State.

Task Force member Gary Kinnaman spoke about giving life, and how that is at the heart of service. But giving life (service) is not always easy, it is often painful, it is complex and is a life-long effort. It is for these reasons that we come together. We need one another; it is our friends that help us to "finish the race" strong. Let's all be thankful that we do not need to "run the race" alone.

Cassandra Larsen, Governor Brewer's Policy Advisor for Human Services, also spoke about service. She thanked Task Force members for their commitment to serving Arizonans in need. She then read a passage from Governor Brewer's "2012 State of the State" address regarding volunteerism and service. The full text of the Governor's address may be found at http://azgovernor.gov/dms/upload/GS_010912_2012SoSAddress.pdf, and the excerpt read by Cassandra begins near the bottom of page 9.

II. Review and Action – November 18, 2011 Task Force Meeting Minutes

Chair Crist asked for, and received, a motion and a second. The November 18, 2011 Task Force Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Staff Report



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Chuck Fitzgerald briefed attendees on a few activities/achievements since the November Task Force Meeting. To include:

- Website traffic averaged 40 unique visitors daily; "Foster Care" pages are most visited; 2.6 pages averaged per visit; 56% of all visitors were first-time visitors
- Speaking engagements highlighting ArizonaSERVES, included: KPXQ interview, Southern Gila County Community Network Team in Globe, and several Maricopa County based community meetings.
- 4 CPS Visitation rooms were adopted and renovated, one by local businesses in Gilbert and three by Cox Communications in Apache Junction.

IV. Success Stories

Chair Crist asked attendees to share a personal or professional success story from 2011; "the organizations represented around the table are doing marvelous work throughout Arizona, let's share some of those successes." He started the discussion by speaking of Central Christian Church's "thanksgiving offering" which saw donations of \$125,000+ to support the efforts of the Arizona Friends of Foster Care Foundation. Chair Crist praised the leadership of Senior Pastor Cal Jernigan and the commitment of his congregation. Other success stories included:

- New families in Yuma have started the foster family process as a result of ArizonaSERVES outreach efforts through churches
- ArizonaSERVES participation in a fall prevention event in Sierra Vista
- Many foster care events in the faith community to include Phoenix First Assembly, Scottsdale Bible, Central Christian
- The formation of the No Child Waiting Coalition to find adoptive homes for waiting children; Focus of the Family's "Wait No More" adoption from foster care event on February 11, 2012 - details at www.icareaboutorphans.org
- Faith in Action event at Bethany Bible church, calling faith community members to community service
- Arizona National Guard and the Coalition for Military Families partnership to provide training for faith community leaders to improve serving military personnel and their families
- Benevolence and Beyond Summit that helped faith community leaders to understand poverty in terms of "lack of relationships" not simply a lack of resources.
- National Adoption Day was a great success as 300+ children were united with their forever families; powerful to see "so much unbridled joy" at a courthouse.
- Arizona Season of Service efforts have included many "faith community and K-12 school" partnerships.
- HopeFest Phoenix is being planned and will occur on April 14, 2012. This will be a one-day care event at Chase Field. 160 community and government partners are engaged. Thousands will be served on that day. Details at <http://cityserveaz.com>



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V. Task Force Strategy Discussion

Chair Crist asked for attendees to think about the activity of the Task Force over the next 12 months, and to engage in a conversation that would help inform a strategic plan. He started the conversation by suggesting we might “front burner” the Issues of Foster Care Participation and Supervised CPS Visits. This would not mean forgoing the other three Issues, but bring a spotlight to these two Issues.

Director Carter spoke about the recent Child Safety Task Force and its recommendations to the Governor. In general, the recommendations did not address growing the capacity of the communities to provide healthy, safe and loving homes – both temporary and permanent. He asked the Task Force to sharpen its focus on foster and adoptive care; this would pair nicely with energy in our communities around this issue. This Task Force might coalesce community energy around growing the capacity of the foster care and adoption system. This would greatly improve child safety. “Wouldn’t it be great for Arizona to be known as a state where no child languishes in the child welfare system?”

Comments regarding this “re-focusing” of the Task Force’s efforts included:

- I agree with this approach; we can measure our success by counting the number of waiting children
- The faith community is engaged in foster/adoptive care today. They understand the issue, and it is core to their missions
- This seems right; see where God is working and go there. There is definitely an organic movement around this Issue
- There are natural connection points between the other Issues and these two; for instance, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- The community’s energy is definitely behind this
- We can use our success over the next year as a template to tackle the remaining Issues
- Every sector of our community can help with this; there are many ways to help
- Child Well-Being is a message that resonates well in the community
- You either steward moments that present themselves or you ignore them. Let’s not miss this opportunity.
- Success in Foster Care/CPS Visits will provide us traction to take on the other Issues.

The Task Force reached consensus to narrow the focus of the Task Force to Foster Care Participation and Supervised CPS Visits. Calling this “Child Well-Being” keeps all five Issue Areas in play.

Chair Crist suggested seating a sub-committee to develop a list of connection points between the “Foster Care/CPS Visits” and “Child Care/Elder Independence/Transportation” Issue areas of Arizona*SERVES*. This list will help inform the 2012 Arizona*SERVES* strategic/action plan. He asked for, and received, a motion and a second. It carried unanimously. Susan Corsaro-



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Johnson, Diane Swanson and Mark Upton volunteered to join this sub-committee. Staff will facilitate this committee's efforts.

Staff will draft an ArizonaSERVES "Child Well-Being" action plan for 2012.

VI. Call to the Public

VII. Closing Statements

Chair Crist encouraged Task Force members to continue fostering connections for ArizonaSERVES, and to not give back any of the ground we've already gained.

Chair Crist thanked Task Force members for "re-enlisting" for another year, and asked those who want to reconsider their involvement to speak directly with him or Jamie in the next couple of weeks.

Director Carter introduced Ms. Tasya Peterson to the Task Force. Tasya is the new Director of Communications for the Arizona Department of Economic Security. She will be supporting our efforts with regards to Marketing and Communications.

The next Task Force meeting is on March 16, 2012

VIII. Adjourn

A motion, a second, and a unanimous approval for adjournment were received at 11:50 a.m.